Growth rate of consumer goods

2077. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that consumer goods growth rate for April to November, 1998 was 2.1 percent compared to 4.4 percent during the previous year; and

(b) what steps Government have taken to check the slide?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) As per the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) the growth rate of Consumer goods sector during April—November, 1998 was 2.1% as compared to 4.4% during the corresponding period of the last year. As per the latest information, during April-December, 1998 the growth rate of Consumer goods sector is 2.8% as against 4.6% during April-December 1997.

(b) The Government has announced various measures for correcting sectoral policies and to induce faster growth.

The steps taken to improve industrial growth are:—

1. Special package announced for revival of growth in exports.
2. Repeal of ULCRA and incentive to house ownership.
3. The Government has allowed buy back of shares and intercorporate loans to boost investment and revive the capital market.

In the Budget for 1999-2000, various measures have been announced for revival of industry to accelerate industrial growth. These include:—

(i) New Competition Laws to replace Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act.

(ii) The list of automatic approval for FDI will be expanded to cover important industrial and service sectors.

(iii) A Foreign Investment Implementation Authority within the Ministry of Industry has been announced for quicker investment inflows and speedier implementation of projects.

(iv) Automatic approval for investment upto 100% by NRIs, OCBs for all items except those which attract notified equity cap/ compulsory licensing/public sector reservation under Industrial Policy/ reservation for small scale sector.

(v) A major overhaul of excise duty rates from present 11 rates reduced to only 3.

(vi) Restoration of 100% MODVAT credit.

(vii) 7 major *ad valorem* rates of custom duty reduced to 5 basic rates.

(viii) Massive thrust for road construction financed by rupee one per litre surcharge on diesel.

(ix) Credit Insurance Scheme to be launched for SSI units.

(x) Fiscal package consisting of custom duty reduction announced for Information Technology sector.

(xi) R & D activity provided further income tax concessions.

(xii) A comprehensive package for the housing sector has been announced. A boost to housing will increase the demand for cement, steel and other construction material.

After the Budget, the Reserve Bank of India has cut Bank rate, slashed Repo rate and brought down CRR to reduce the interest cost of funds.

Prime Minister's package for the North East

2078. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of a proposal envisaged in the Prime Minis-

ter's package to the North East about a new industrial policy specific to the North Eastern Region; and

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken, so far, to implement it alongwith the action to be taken in the near future?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) Yes, Sir. A New Industrial Policy and other concessions for industrial development of the North Eastern Region were announced by the Government in December, 1997.

(b) Most of the points of the North East Industrial Policy including extending transport subsidy scheme; grant of Rs. 20 crores to North East Development Finance Corporation; Capital Investment Subsidy and 3% interest subsidy on working capital loans for industrial units in the North East have been notified. In the Budget for 1999-2000, industries set up in the North East in specified industrial centres have been given ten year tax holiday.

Vacant posts in Hindustan Paper Corporation

2079. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of posts of Directors and Managing Directors lying vacant in Hindustan Paper Corporation; and

(b) since when they are lying vacant along with the reasons for not filling up the posts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL): (a) One post of Director (Operations) in Hindustan Paper Corporation Ltd. is lying vacant.

(b) The post is lying vacant since 1.11.1996. Action has been initiated for filling up the post.

Clearance by FIPB

2080. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of projects which have been cleared by the Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) during the last three years;

(b) the details thereof project-wise and sector-wise;

(c) the actual investment made by the Companies who got the clearance by the Board; and

(d) what are the details thereof Company-wise and project-wise?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) and (b) Sir, 6,414 foreign collaboration proposals (financial and technical) have been cleared by Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) during the last three years.

Details of Project-wise and Sector-wise proposals in incorporated in the monthly SIA Newsletter brought out by Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion which is widely circulated including of the House.

(c) and (d) During the last three years inflow of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) has been to the tune of Rs. 40,134.89 crore.

Company-wise and project-wise details of actual inflow of FDI are not centrally maintained.

Irregularities in CCI

2081. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether owing to a serious lapses of his Minstry, the Chairman and Managing Director of he Cement Corporation of India (CCI) continues to be in coveted post though his tenure ended in January, 1999 and corruption charges levelled against him;